

The Department of the Interior and its Bureau of Indian Affairs are charged with administrative oversight of the majority of issues affecting American Indians over which the federal government has jurisdiction. In 1995, some of these matters related to gaming or land in trust acquisitions, such as: judicial review of DOI's acquisitions; whether DOI would intervene in stalled compact negotiations between tribes and states; possible amendments to IGRA; threatened taxation of revenues from Indian gaming; and threatened deep cuts in the BIA budget. There also were numerous Indian affairs issues that were largely unrelated to gaming – relating, for example, to water rights, education, health care or other BIA funding issues. In 1995, there were approximately 75,000 employees at Interior, with BIA employing approximately 10,000 people, making it one of DOI's largest components.<sup>66</sup>

The BIA is divided into 12 geographic areas, each of which is managed by an "Area Office." In addition, within each area are several regional "Agencies," each of which deals with the whole range of issues affecting a particular tribe or group of tribes in its portion of the Area Office's region. In most cases, tribal contact with the BIA on everyday issues begins (and often ends) with the Agency. The Agency's actions are, in many cases, conducted at the direction of the Area Office, or subject to its review.

The Hudson casino application fell within the purview of BIA's Minneapolis Area Office (MAO), which interacts with tribes in Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan and Iowa. The Great Lakes Agency, the subdivision of the MAO located in Ashburn, Wis., responsible for interaction

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<sup>66</sup>Other sections of Interior include the National Park Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement, the Minerals Management Service, and the U.S. Geological Survey and the Bureau of Reclamation.